

LYNCHBURG CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE: **October 25, 2005, Work Session**

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 2

CONSENT:

REGULAR: **X**

CLOSED SESSION:
(Confidential)

ACTION: **X**

INFORMATION:

ITEM TITLE: **Complaints About Signs Designating Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard**

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the City Manager to increase the size of the signs designating Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard with resources from previously appropriated funds in the General Fund Reserve for Contingencies.

SUMMARY: Since the erection of the signs designating Fifth Street and Memorial Avenue as Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard I have been contacted by two members of the community who expressed concerns about the signs.

Pastor Joseph Lewis's recollection was that Council directed that signs designating the corridor be placed on top of every street sign in the corridor. He has expressed deep disappointment that this has not been done. I explained to Pastor Lewis that because of the already present clutter of signs, poles, etc. in the corridor, and the concern that placing signs on top of existing street signs would be both confusing and expensive (because there is no standardized placement or size of street signs) staff came up with an alternative means of designating the corridor. I also explained that the proposed plan for signage was discussed with the Physical Development Committee and presented to City Council both during a work session and during a televised regular meeting. Pictures of the proposed signs were also published in the newspaper. Nevertheless, Pastor Lewis insists that staff has not followed Council's direction. Therefore, I suggested that the matter be brought back to Council for its guidance.

Ms. Mary Payne has also contacted me regarding the signs. She expressed a concern, that she says is shared by others in the community, that the signs on the poles are too small. She would also like to see a sign near the Legacy Museum and larger entry signs at the ends of the corridor.

I agree that the signs on the poles are too small. While the signs appeared to be of an appropriate size when the mock-ups were displayed, after mounting they appear out of proportion to the height of the poles. Furthermore, their location over seven feet off the ground make them harder to see from moving vehicles. It has also been pointed out that the sign on Memorial Avenue in front of E.C. Glass is partially hidden by tree branches.

PRIOR ACTION(S): January 25, 2005, Council directed that a public hearing be held regarding a proposal to rename Fifth Street in honor of Dr. King. March 8, 2005, public hearing held and Council directed that Fifth Street and Memorial Avenue be designated as Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. March 15, 2005, sign plan preliminary discussion at PDC. April 12, 2005 Work Session, staff presented proposed signs for Council's review. April 12, 2005 regular meeting, proposed signs again presented before Council. May 10, 2005 Council declined to reduce the length of the designation.

FISCAL IMPACT: The estimated cost of replacing the small pole-mounted signs is \$3900.00 (materials and labor). No estimate has been determined for placing signs on top of every street sign. If that was directed, the development of a standardized street sign plan for the corridor and its implementation by replacing the current signs is recommended. This would probably cost in the range of \$10,000 to \$20,000.

CONTACT(S): Kimball Payne, 455-3990

ATTACHMENT(S): None

REVIEWED BY: lkp